

Pittsfield State Forest October Mountain State Forest Trail Plan



DCR Public Presentation

June 29, 2016; 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
DCR West Region Headquarters

DCR Mission Statement



To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well being of all

Trails Planning Process

The Pittsfield State Forest (PSF, 10,000 ac) and October Mountain State Forest (OMSF, 16,000 ac) Trail Plan planning process has included the following:

- Input from a key stakeholders group
- GIS/GPS Road and Trail Inventory
- Field reconnaissance
- Literature review
- OHV Fine Filter assessment
- User data: trail counts, OHV permits
- DCR field staff expertise and knowledge
- Two participatory trail planning workshops



The trail plan documents:

- existing conditions of the trail system
- key features and highlights
- primary “managed” trail-based recreational experiences
- sensitive resources
- current management challenges
- user demand and desires



Key Findings

- Over 100 miles of trail in each of these two state forests
- Over 34 miles of illegal trail in PSF and approximately 30 miles illegal trail in OMSF
- Primary users include walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, OHV riders and snowmobilers
- 16% of trails in 'Poor' condition
- OHV trails are in particularly poor condition and difficult to repair / maintain
- Little evidence of direct user conflict
- Sensitive resources include rare species, water supplies, steep slopes, and cultural sites
- Public desires for improved maps and signage, trail repair, expanded parking, expanded trail mileage for certain uses, and enhanced trail connections

Recommendations

The plan makes 18 priority management recommendations for Pittsfield and October Mountain State Forests.

These recommendations are geared toward:

- enhancing the user experience
- protecting sensitive resources
- minimally managing recreational demand

Recommendations

6.1 Engage an Experienced OHV Planning Consultant to Develop an OHV Funding, Maintenance and Management Plan



Recommendations

6.2 Expand Regional and Complex Staffing to Successfully Manage and Maintain these Multi-Use Trail Systems

- Backfill the Western Regional Trail Coordinator Position / Create a Regional Volunteer Coordinator.
- Staff a seasonal OHV trail maintenance crew with appropriate mechanized equipment.
- Continue to make use of SCA and contracted crews as available and necessary to complete additional trail repair projects



Recommendations

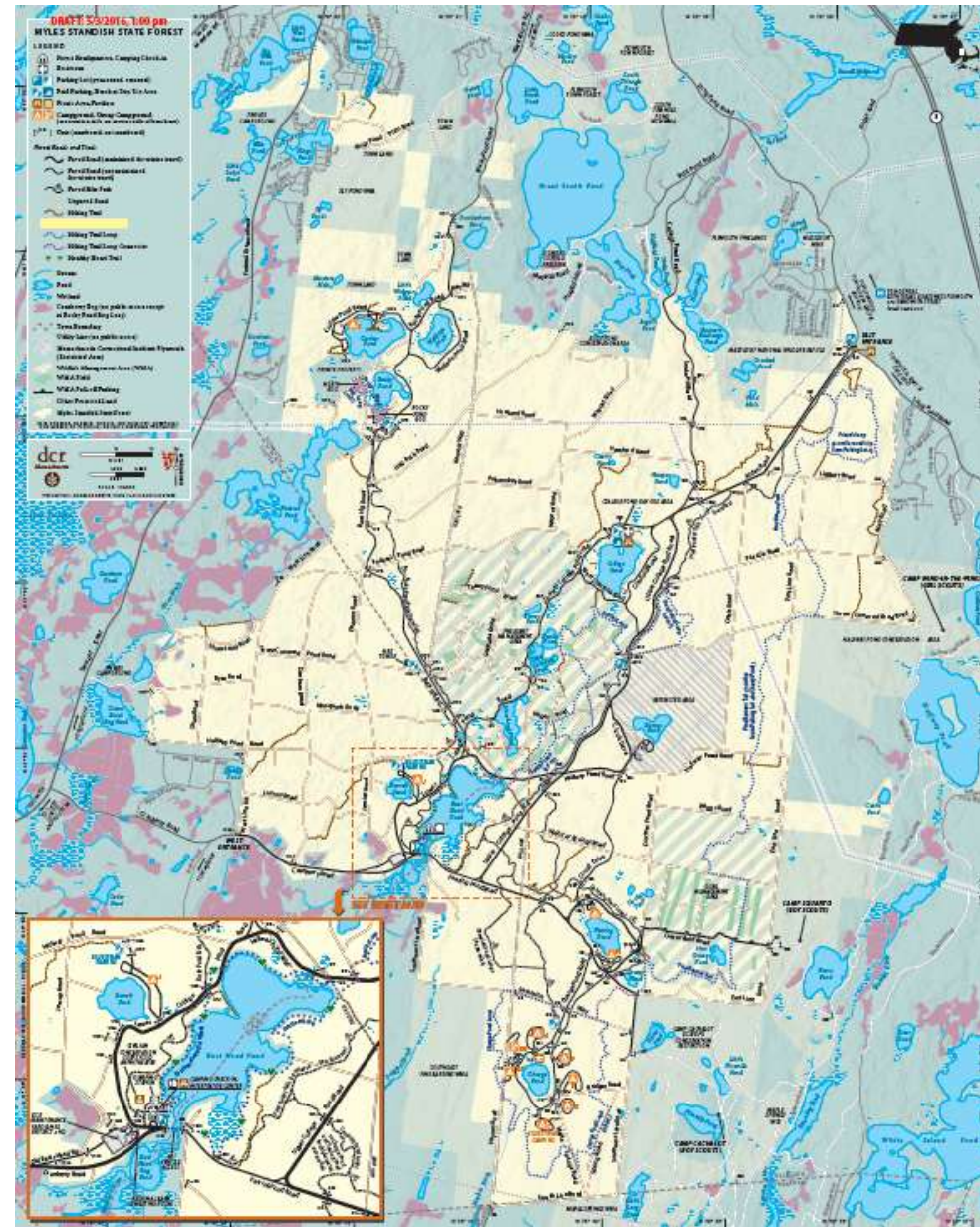
6.3 Implement Approved Trail Recommendations in Cooperation with Stewardship Partners



**Western Massachusetts
Public Lands Alliance**



6.4 Produce a New Maps for PSF and OMSF



Recommendations

6.5 Create Disincentives to Help Halt Illegal Trail Building

- Trail Closures
- Education and signage
- Engage stakeholders to find legal alternatives
- Monitor



Area Closed! Stay on Legal Trails

*Trail building without permission is
illegal and against all trail user
guidelines*



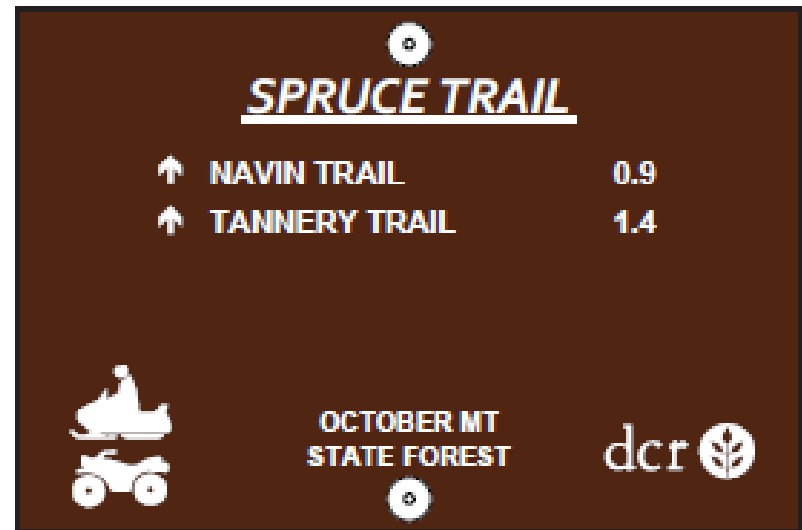
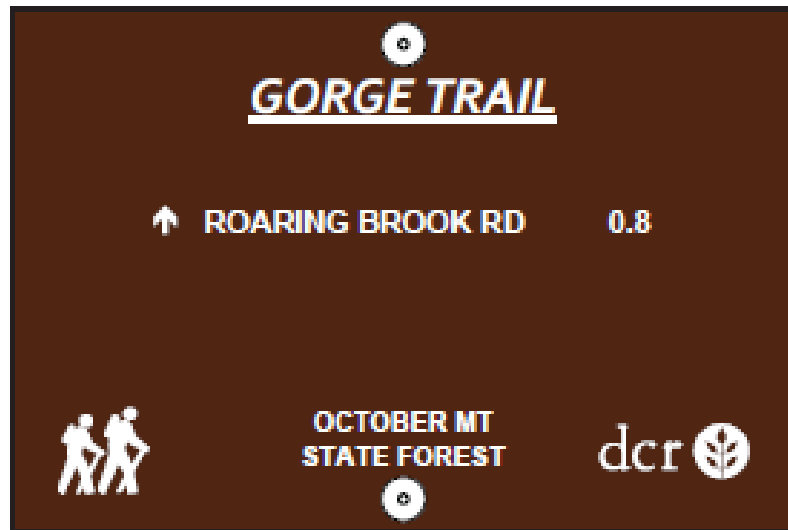
**Please stay on legal trails,
and help this area recover!**

Questions? Call 586-8706 ext. 20



Recommendations

6.6 / 6.12 Enhance Trail Marking, Wayfinding and User Information



Recommendations

6.7 / 6.13 Repair and Maintain Priority Trails and Trail Segments

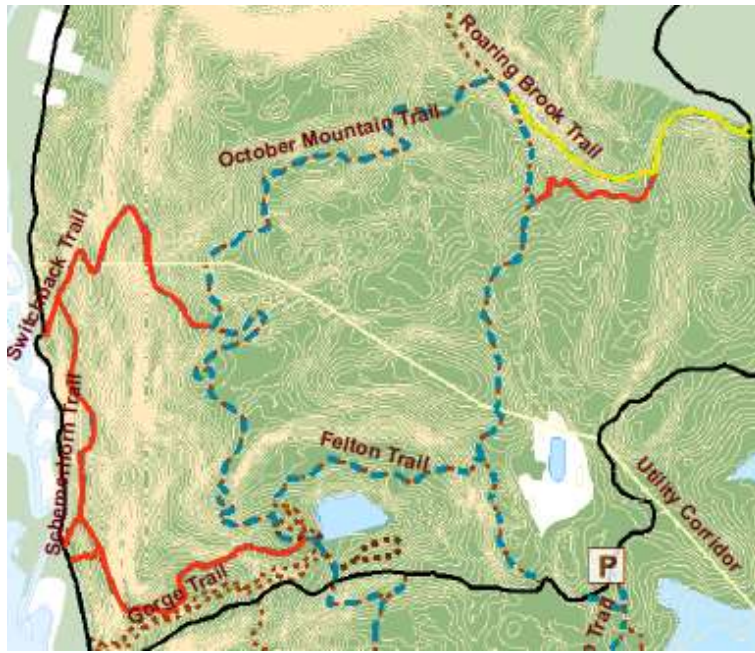
- Taconic Skyline Trail
- CCC Trail
- Daniels Trail
- Schoolhouse Trail
- Finerty Pond Trail
- Gorilla Trail



Recommendations

6.8 / 6.16 Block, Close and Restore Poor-Condition, Fall-Line, Illegal and Difficult to Manage Trails and Access Points.

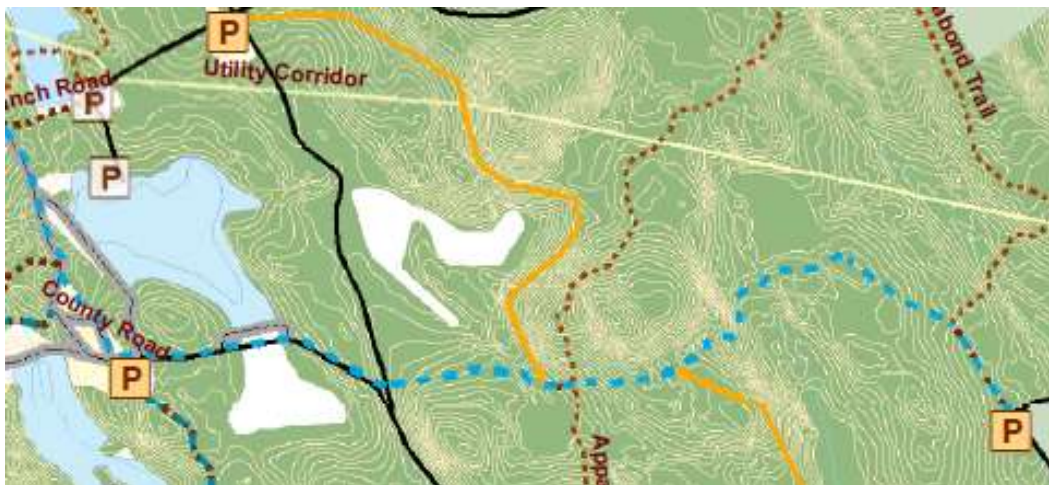
- Brickhouse Mt
- Brook Trail (lower)
- Short Trail
- Schmerhorn Trail
- Switchback Trail
- ...



Recommendations

6.14 /6.10 Expand / Enhance Parking Areas to Improve User Access

- Route 20
- Potter Mt Road
- Watson Road
- Schoolhouse Trailhead
- Four Corners
- ...



Recommendations

6.15 Repair and Reopen Schermerhorn Road



Recommendations

6.9 / 6.10 / 6.17 / 6.18 Authorize Target Trails as Legal.
Re-open closed trails. Evaluate and develop new trail
connections.

- Upper Honwee
- Girls Scout
- Turner Connector
- West Mt Loop
- Gorilla Trail
- Connect Gorilla to Schoolhouse
- Connect Schoolhouse to Navin
- Roaring Brook Loop
- Single Track near campground
- ...



Recommendations

6.11 Restore and Create Vista and Destinations along the Trail System



Pittsfield State Forest Trails Plan

Proposed Trail System Changes

Map Legend

Pittsfield Roads and Trails

Type

- Trail
- Forest Road/Trail
- Recommended - Open to OHVs
- Recommended - Authorize as Legal
- Recommended - Closures
- Recommended - Potential New Trail
- Streams
- Wetlands
- Contour Lines (3m)

Photos:

- Noon: Example Trail Closure
- 4:00: Sample Paved Path Repairs
- 5:45: Completed Skyline Repairs
- 9:30: Sample Trail Signage



- Noon: Example Trail Closure
- 4:00: Sample Paved Path Repairs
- 5:45: Completed Skyline Repairs
- 9:30: Sample Trail Signage



0 0.35 0.7 1.4 2.1 2.8 Miles

Map created by DCR Greenways and Trails Program
Data from MassGIS and DCR Road and Trail Inventory
Boundary lines are approximate

October Mountain State Forest Trail Plan

Proposed Trail System Changes



Map Legend

Proposed Changes

- P New / Proposed Parking
- Recommended - Open to OHVs
- Recommended - Deauthorize / Close
- Recommended - Discontinue OHV Use
- Recommended - Potential New Trail
- Contour Lines (3m)

0 0.325 0.65 1.3 1.95 2.6 Miles

Map created by DCR Greenways and Trails Program
Data from MassGIS and DCR Road and Trail Inventory
Boundary lines are approximate

For more information:

The draft plan and accompanying maps are available for viewing on the DCR website at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/public-outreach/public-meetings/>.

(Google “DCR Public Meetings”)

Public comments on the draft plan may be submitted to DCR until August 1, 2016, either online at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/public-outreach/submit-public-comments/> or by writing to the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Public Outreach, 251 Causeway Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02114.

(Google “DCR Submit Public Comments”)

